LOCAL NEWS

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Around the Island

Assessment Slashed By Millions

PORT ALBERNI — MacMillan and Bloedel Ltd. assessments in this city were reduced by the court of revision, sitting here Tuesday, to the amount in a fixed assessment agreement which has been tested in two B.C. courts during the past year.

The reduction of $41,360,000 on the land and improvements will bring Port Alberni's assessment roll down to approximately $23,500,000 and will mean that the provincial government will be picking up the bill for a large proportion of school costs which had been the responsibility of the city.

Under the existing formula the government bears all school costs in excess of an established mill rate which cannot be less than 15 mills in municipalities and last year amounted to 16.276 in Port Alberni.

MacMillan and Bloedel Ltd. representatives attending the court of revision presented a certified copy of the 1945 fixed assessment agreement bylaw and informed the court that the B.C. court of appeal had upheld the company's appeal against a supreme court judgment which had held that M. & B. was responsible for payment of the school taxes on the full assessed value of the property and improvements.

The court of revision reduced assessment on the company's land from $351,540 to $100,000 and on improvements from $41,678,471 to $700,000.

The Corporation of Port Alberni, which had won its case in the supreme court on the contention that the fixed assessment agreement had been abrogated as far as school taxes are concerned by the Equalization of Assessment Act, this week gave their lawyers instructions to request leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada from the B.C. appeal court decision which had set aside the B.C. Supreme Court ruling.

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NANAIMO—The Canadian customs office here reported yesterday that exports of pulp, lumber, and iron ore from Nanaimo were down slightly over the last month.

Total of 5,313,766 board feet of lumber, 10,000 tons of iron ore and 5,983 tons of pulp were loaded onto 17 ships.

Most of the lumber shipments went to South America and South Africa. Pulp was bound for the United Kingdom, the Continent, Australia and India. Iron ore from Texada went to Japan.

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NANAIMO—The trial of Laik Singh of New Westminster will continue in Nanaimo assize court at 10 a.m. today. He is charged with criminal negligence in the death of Jagtar Singh.

An RCMP report stated that Laik Singh was the driver of the car which went off the highway and struck a power pole at Lake Cowichan last August 16.

Jagtar Singh, a passenger in the car, died at the scene. Laik Singh is being defended by well-known Vancouver lawyer Angelo Branca.

Chief Re-Appointed

ALBERNI — Veteran fire chief A. (Sandy) Gilmour was reappointed by city council, while Robert Ashby was again named assistant fire chief.

Alderman George McRae, reporting on the annual meeting of the fire department, passed on a request for the appointment of four more volunteer firemen.

Requests for a standpipe at the firehall and filling of an adjacent vacant lot were referred to the works department for estimates.

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PORT ALBERNI—The public is invited to a colorful ceremony when a mass parade of the Albernis' cadet corps will be reviewed Saturday evening by Lieutenant-Governor Frank Ross.

The parade will start at 8.30 p.m. in the drill hall and no one will be admitted after the ceremonies start.

On parade will be the honor guard, D Company, Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princess Mary's), Canadian Scottish pipe band, Royal Canadian Sea Cadet Corps "Alberni," Canadian Scottish (Alberni) Cadet Corps; 609 Alberni Valley Squadron, Royal Canadian Air Cadets.

The three cadet bugle bands will lead their units in the march past.

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NANAIMO — Administration of the Senior Citizens' Housing development here may revert to the Kiwanis Club.

Kiwanians are considering the matter, said Warren Wellwood at a meeting of the development committee.

Many organizations are presently involved in the housing development and it was felt the administration was becoming "too heavy."

Donation of $500 was given to the new development by Soroptimists. This brings to $6,500 the contributions from the women's organization.

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PORT ALBERNI — The board of School District 70 has recommended acceptance of the tender of Port Home Builders Ltd. for construction of a new school in Cherry Creek area.

Port Home Builders' bid was $65,258, lowest of three received for the six-classroom building.

Turner Contracting Ltd. entered a tender of $68,312 and Souther Construction Co. Ltd., $72,312.

The building is scheduled for completion for the fall term.

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PORT ALBERNI—Fred Moore, a veteran of the First World War, died in the Veterans' Hospital, Victoria, Tuesday at the age of 68 years.

A resident of this district since 1942, he had made his home on Walker Road.

He leaves his wife, Clara, and one son, Norman, at home; three daughters, Mrs. Lee Donovan, Mrs. William Lysne and Mrs. Peter McMurdo, all of this district; two sisters, Mrs. D. McLeod, Alberni, and Mrs. L. Dawes, Claybourne, B.C., as well as 15 grandchildren.

Cheque for $4,035

NANAIMO — A cheque for $4,035 was presented to the B.C. Tuberculosis Society, yesterday by Jim Helmcken, local Christmas seal campaign chairman.

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UCLUELET — Robert A. Shrubshall was elected president of Ucluelet-Port Albion Chamber of Commerce at the annual meeting here. Other officers elected were, vice-president, Allan Davison; second vice-president, Donald W. Hillier; secretary-treasurer, D. Needham.

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ALBERNI — The Somass River has been chosen in preference to two other suggested sources of supply for a proposed new water system for Alberni.

A report was adopted by council in which the Somass River system was recommended and city solicitor R. J. Ohs was directed to prepare a money bylaw to be put to the ratepayers later in the year.

Capital cost of the recommended plan is $359,700, including a pumping station and booster pump, pipelines including renewal of mains on Johnson Street and River Road.

Annual operating, maintenance and debt retirement costs were estimated at $36,800.

Among advantages of the proposed Somass River source were listed improvement to distribution system pressures, unlimited supply at no additional cost, lowest capital investment, pumping station and distribution lines within the city, accessibility of supply lines for inspection and maintenance work, quality as good or better than other sources according to department of health tests.

'A Tribute Born of Sincere Esteem'

Moment of amusement in dignified proceedings occurs as Lieutenant-Governor Frank M. Ross, trying to sign Victoria's Roll of Freemen, finds pen supplied won't work on parchment, and neither will one offered by Mayor Percy Scurrah. Third pen finally did job.

Mrs. Ross and mayor's four-year-old granddaughter Barbara Jennings become better acquainted after city hall ceremony in which lieutenant-governor was received as Freeman of city. Barbara presented bouquet of roses to Mrs. Ross, who also received engraved compact as memento.

Casket for scroll proclaiming lieutenant-governor Freeman of Victoria, made of B.C. silver, gleams brightly in light of photographers' lamps as Mayor Scurrah makes presentation. Distinguished audience of about 130 in council chamber witnessed ceremony.—(Colonist photos.)

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Stock Shots Winner

Looking over the ticker tape quotations that won him the $100 prize in The Daily Colonist Stock Shots Competition No. 3, is young Victoria government employee Don S. Thomson, 150 Douglas Street. He chose Massey Ferguson, New Calumet and Tidal on his winning entry. Graduating with a BA in economics and mathematics at UBC last summer, Don has quickly put his knowledge to good use. (See further details on Page 8.)

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Lieutenant-Governor Fourth Freeman

Glow Warms Chamber As City Honors Ross

By R. O. MARRION

Warm affection was evident on every face and in every word yesterday as Lieutenant-Governor Frank M. Ross was received at city hall as a Freeman of Victoria.

And Lieutenant-Governor and Mrs. Ross, in brief addresses, showed affection for Victoria, too.

Before a specially-invited audience of about 130, including many distinguished citizens, the lieutenant-governor was received and sworn in as a Freeman — Victoria's fourth since the city received the power to confer such an honor in 1927—and presented with a scroll and its silver casket.

BEAMS APPROVAL

The audience beamed approval as Ald. Arthur Dowell, proposing a formal resolution for His Honor's reception as a Freeman, paid tribute to his record in business and industrial life, his contributions to the development of the country, and his character and personality.

"The enthusiasm and unanimity of the members of this council in deciding to confer this honor upon him, and the spontaneous way in which citizens on every hand and in all circumstances and stations of society have wholeheartedly welcomed and endorsed the council's action, are in themselves an eloquent tribute born of sincere esteem," Ald. Dowell said.

He also praised Mrs. Ross for her important part in "this case of selfless, dedicated service."

WELL EARNED

Mayor Percy Scurrah, presenting the scroll and casket, said the honor was "well earned, for no couple could have shown greater devotion in fulfilling the duties of office than have our Lieutenant-Governor and Mrs. Ross."

The lieutenant-governor said in reply he would always be proud that the greatest honor a city could give had been given him by Victoria, an old city in Canadian history, the capital of B.C. and a city unsurpassed in beauty, surroundings and pleasant living.

In Victoria, he said, he and Mrs. Ross had "met nothing but friendship, cordial relations and assistance at every point."

MEMORABLE THING

Mrs. Ross, after being presented with an engraved silver compact by the mayor and a bouquet of roses by the mayor's granddaughter, Barbara Jennings, said the conferring of the honor on the lieutenant-governor by the capital city would be "one of the most memorable things in our life."

The lieutenant-governor's arrival at city hall was witnessed by many spectators lining both sides of Douglas. Before entering the hall, he inspected a guard-of-honor of police and firemen and war-veteran civic employees, all of whom volunteered to serve in the guard.

UCLUELET—At a meeting of Ucluelet village commissioners, Mrs. G. A. H. Baxter, Long Beach, was appointed municipal clerk for Ucluelet, replacing Mrs. Russell Shortridge who left this week for The Tahsis.

Mrs. Baxter was sworn in by Magistrate Joseph H. Webb.

Too Little Known About Pensions

By TED SHACKLEFORD

One of the amazing things about pensions is how little people know about them—and I was no exception before I began this assignment.

People have phoned me, called in to see me and written to me with misconceptions galore. One irate $75-a-month pensioner was surprised to hear me insist that not all $55-a-month pensioners have bank accounts and own their own homes.

Old-Age Security is a $55-a-month pension paid by the federal government to anyone over 70 who has lived in Canada continuously for the 10 years before application.

ALSO A PENSION

Old-Age Assistance is also a pension of $55 a month, shared by the federal and provincial governments, and paid to anyone between 65 and 69 who has lived in Canada continuously for the 10 years preceding application and whose income does not exceed $310 a year.

Supplementary assistance is the cost-of-living bonus of up to $20 a month paid by the provincial government to persons receiving either of the two forms of old-age pensions, who have lived in British Columbia for three years, and who can meet certain income limitations.

The amount of supplementary assistance is determined by a complicated formula, based on the income of a specific person. It can vary anywhere within $20.

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Menu Continues To Improve

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And if a person who has been granted supplementary assistance earns more than the limit specified, then the allowance is reduced accordingly.

A pamphlet, clearly setting out all the ramifications of the federal and provincial pension schemes, including pensions for the blind and disabled, is published by the social welfare branch of the provincial health department.

Application for pensions, or information about them, must be made at one of three places.

People living in the city should apply to the city health and welfare centre, 1947 Cook Street; people in Saanich should apply to the Saanich social welfare centre at 3681 Douglas Street, near the Trans-Canada Highway; and residents of Oak Bay, Esquimalt, unorganized territory, the Gulf Islands, or south of the Malahat should apply to the provincial social welfare branch, 525 Superior Street.

And a word of hope from William Hooson, the city welfare officer . . . "The means test (which must be taken before the provincial supplementary assistance is given) is not too popular, as most people can't understand it," he said. "But I feel it is pretty liberally interpreted here."

My menu is continuing its slight improvement apart from a small setback last night—I forgot to buy meat for my dinner before the butcher shops closed.

SHREDDED WHEAT

Breakfast was shredded wheat with hot milk, two fried eggs with two strips of bacon and two cups of tea. Lunch was scrambled eggs (two of them) four slices of toast with margarene and marmalade and two cups of tea.

Dinner was half a tin of corned beef, potato pancakes (perfect this time), two slices of toast, margarine and marmalade and again, two cups of tea.

Notably missing from my diet so far have been green vegetables. I'll try to find some cheap ones today—ones that I can cook.

And talking about cooking, we still need cheap, easy to prepare recipes for meals. If sufficient recipes are sent in they will be published together to help pensioners.

Yesterday I spent a further 83 cents—matches, 35 cents, a bus trip and a tin of corned beef, 35 cents. I have now spent $32.39 and have $22.61 left.

Colonist reporter Ted Shackleford has been assigned to live on $55 for a month to discover how senior citizens on old-age assistance payments live and what their problems are.

He will be available in The Daily Colonist office—EV 3-4111 — between 4 and 5 p.m. each day.

Third Mortimore Talk On CBU Radio Tonight

Third in a series of talks about British Columbia's Indians, by Colonist staff writer G. E. Mortimore, will be heard on radio station CBU, Vancouver, at 10.15 p.m. today.

The talks are based on the articles which Mr. Mortimore wrote for the Colonist under the title of "The Strangers." The radio talks will continue every Thursday night until March 12.

Hearing Aid Off

He Couldn't Hear —Didn't Want To

Court of revision hearing Victoria ratepayers' complaints about 1959 assessments had some lively moments yesterday.

In its morning session it contended with one irate property owner who amused the spectators and confounded the three members with a sort of censorship.

When the court tried to give him explanations and answers, he disconnected his hearing aid.

Chairman Waldo Skillings asked him if he could hear, and he said no, and he didn't want to.

In the afternoon, the court ran into sharp words from William Wood, 675 Battery, who said the assessment on his house had increased from $1,640 in 1951 to $4,600 now.

"You're penalizing all old home-owners, not only me," Mr. Wood said, and complained that the government had put $28 in one pocket for the taxpayer and taken $58 from another.

"The provincial government doesn't get $1 of your taxes," Mr. Skillings told him.

"They are the ones who put the assessments up on old houses," Mr. Wood said.

House Lauds Ross

The provincial legislature, by a unanimous standing vote, yesterday extended congratulations to Lieutenant-Governor Frank Ross on his election as a Freeman of the City of Victoria.

George Gregory (Lib.-Victoria) proposed the motion which was seconded by Donald Smith (SC-Victoria.)

Mr. Smith called His Honor "a great Canadian."

Premier Bennett commented that the government had "received tremendous co-operation" from the lieutenant-governor and Opposition Leader Robert Strachan added his commendations.

21-Gun Salute to Mark Her Majesty's Accession

Seventh anniversary of the accession to the throne of Her Majesty the Queen will be marked here at noon on Friday with a royal salute of 21 guns.

The salute will be fired from Work Point by gunners of the 5th B.C. Independent Medium Battery, RCA.